CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA Hearing Date/Agenda Number Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Item 4.a. H.L.C. 6/01/05 801 North First Street, Room 400 San José, California 95110-1795 File Number HL05-151 Application Type Historic Landmark Designation Council District SNI STAFF REPORT N/A Planning Area Central Assessor's Parcel Number(s) 249-27-030 PROJECT DESCRIPTION Completed by: Sally Notthoff Zarnowitz Location: 897 Jackson St. Net Acreage: 0.3 Gross Acreage: 0.3 Net Density: n/a Existing Zoning: A(PD) 86-046 Existing Use: Single Family Residence Proposed Zoning: No change Proposed Use: No Change GENERAL PLAN Completed by: SNZ Land Use/Transportation Diagram Designation **Project Conformance:** [x] Yes [] No **MLDR** [ ] See Analysis and Recommendations SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING Completed by: SNZ R-1-8 Residential Residential North: Residential R-1-8 Residential East: Residential R-1-8 Residential South: Residential R-1-8 Residential **ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS** Completed by: SNZ [] Environmental Impact Report found complete [x] Exempt [] Negative Declaration circulated on [] Environmental Review Incomplete [] Negative Declaration adopted on FILE HISTORY Completed by: SNZ Annexation Title: Original City Date: 1885 [x] Recommend Approval Date Approved by: [] Recommend Approval with Conditions [] Recommend Denial

OWNER
Eric Thacker
897 Jackson St.
San Jose CA 95112
PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED Completed by: SNZ
Department of Public Works
None
Other Departments and Agencies
None
GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE
See attached DPR
ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## **BACKGROUND**

The subject site is a single-family house located on the northwest corner of Jackson and North Nineteenth Streets, currently zoned A(PD) Planned Development, and designated Medium Low Density Residential (MLDR) on the General Plan Land Use and Transportation Diagram. Residential uses surround the site. In March of 2005 the John C. Morrill House (897 Jackson Street) was evaluated in an updated Department of Parks and Recreation Form (DPR) and Historic Evaluation Sheet. The DPR (attached) stated that the building exceeded the qualification threshold for City Landmark status. The DPR also stated that the house might be eligible in the future for the National Register under Criterion C or the California Register under Criterion 3, as a significant entity in the context of mid-to-late nineteenth-century residential architecture in Santa Clara County, if renovated in a way that is more consistent with the Standards. Building owner Eric Thacker recently submitted an application for Historic Landmark designation of the residence using the research documented in the DPR. The Historic Landmarks Commission will forward a recommendation on the designation to the City Council for consideration at a public hearing.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCE DESCRIPTION**

The Department of Parks and Recreation Form (DPR523) completed by Archives and Architecture in March of 2005 includes the following information. John Calvin Morrill, a local pioneer who came to Santa Clara County in 1856, built the subject property in 1887. After 30 years farming 160 acres in Milpitas, he sold his ranch and moved to San Jose to begin a new business venture. Morrill became the president of the Garden City Lumber Company, and this house was his advertisement of the firm's work. Morrill's house appears to be architect designed, but the architect is not known. The prominent local architect William Klinkert may have been involved, as Morrill later hired him to supervise his lumber company and be its resident architect. However, Klinkert's obituary and the records of his family indicate that he did not settle in San Jose until 1888.



The main portion of the house is a one-and-one-half-story block, approximately square in plan, with a moderately pitched, pyramidal, hipped roof. Gabled projections with lower ridgelines extend from each of the elevations. At the front (south) and east elevations, the prominent gabled wings are tall and project relatively far. On the front façade, a shed-roof front porch fits between the main wing and the projecting gabled wing. The porch roof extends shallowly across the face of the gabled wing and becomes the roof of a centered, one-story square bay window. On the east elevation the prominent gable steps down into a centered, one-story square bay window, also with a shed roof. On the west elevation, the gabled projection is shallow and is supported by carved outlookers. A salvaged angled bay window has been added to this façade. To the rear (north), the gabled projection is one story, slightly narrower than the main block, with eaves that are lower than the front eaves. Along the western side of the rear wing, a side porch fills the recess, while to the east a shallow addition fills the same area. Both side elevations have had basement entrances added under the rear wing. To the rear two corners of the house, recent octagonal additions have been added; one is enclosed with salvaged windows and trim, and one is an open porch, also with salvaged, non-original trim. The high brick foundation is original, but the basement has been modified for living space, and windows added or modified.

A distinctive, wide, shingled frieze band encircles the top portion of the walls; the shingles are clipped in a "bow tie" pattern, and the bottom of the frieze arches up to accentuate windows at each main gable. The unique cornice trim under the eaves is a spiral-rope pattern where it follows the rake, and the cornice piece changes to a thick quarter-round under the eaves. At the bottom of the shingled frieze is a simple trim band that is punctuated by decorative frieze blocks at the window surrounds. Stick-style bargeboard trusses with decorative pendants further ornament the gable ends. The attic vents are simple, round louvers set high in the shingled gables. The remainder of the residence is clad in v-groove siding with flat board trim at the corners and window surrounds. A heavy water table stretches around the base of the house, above the foundation. The roof is covered with composition shingles.

The front porch is raised on the brick foundation, and turned posts, typical of the style, support its shed roof. Between the posts is heavy spindlework under the eaves, and the low guardrail is built up of heavy square posts framed with a rectangular pattern of openings, continuing down the length of the front steps, and ending in a pair of Eastlake newel posts. The front entry consists of a pair of heavy, raised-panel doors. To the west side is an original rear door onto what appears to be an original side porch with turned posts and heavy handrail boards that match the front.

The original fenestration consists primarily of one-over-one, double-hung wood windows with a jig-sawn apron and a central half-wheel design. The windows in the bays have raised paneling with a central, raised, carved flower. In an area of low eaves above the front door is a decorative window with a six-over-two muntin pattern. At the rear of the house, a number of windows have been added, many of which have the tab-and-wheel apron to match the original design, however, the newer aprons can be identified from their thinner board stock.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Under the provisions of Section 15307 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project is found to be exempt from environmental review in that the project is limited to an action taken by a regulatory agency as authorized by state law or local ordinance to assure the maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of a natural resource where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.

#### GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE

The Landmark Designation for this single-family residence on a 0.3 gross-acre site (3.3 DU/AC) may be determined to conform with the San Jose 2020 General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Medium Low Density Residential (8 Dwelling Units/Acre). The densities set forth for the single-family residential categories represent the maximum allowable density. No minimum density is intended to apply to these categories. In addition, the General Plan's Discretionary Alternate Use Policy for Structures of Historical or Architectural Merit. Allows alternate densities on sites with structures of significant historical or architectural merit if to do so would preserve the structures' historic and architectural qualities, and the use would not otherwise be incompatible with the surrounding area.

## **ANALYSIS**

Landmark designation is proposed for the John C. Morrill House, located at 897 Jackson Street on a 0.3 gross acre site. The proposal is consistent with General Plan historic, archeological and cultural resources goals and policies, which state the preservation of historically or archeologically significant sites, structures and districts is a key consideration in the development review process. These policies also state, "the city should use the landmark designation process of the Historic Preservation Ordinance to promote the preservation of historically or architecturally significant sites and structures."

Although the house has been used as a bed and breakfast inn and the rear and west-side elevations have been modified, these changes appear to be reversible and the residence continues to retain integrity to its original design. The present owners have returned the property to its original use as a single-family residence. If renovated in a way that is more consistent with the Standards the house might be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C or the California Register under Criterion 3 in the future as a significant entity in the context of mid-to-late nineteenth-century residential architecture in Santa Clara County.

The John C. Morrill House merits designation as a historic landmark based on its historical, cultural and architectural significance (see attached DPR). The building qualifies for landmark status based on the following criteria of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Section 13.48.110):

6. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of the 1880's Stick/Eastlake architectural type or specimen.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

The property owner has requested the nomination. A public hearing notice for the project was published in a local newspaper, posted at the site and mailed to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the subject site.

# **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff recommends that the Commission, after holding a public hearing on the subject proposal, recommend that the City Council approve the designation of The John C. Morrill House, located at 897 Jackson Street, as Historic Landmark No. HL05-151.